

REMARKS

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's thorough examination of the application and fully respond herein to the issues presented.

The Examiner has allowed Claims 1–11, 13, 14, and 20. To facilitate immediate allowance, Applicants are cancelling rejected Claims 15, 17, and 18.

Applicants are proposing to amend allowed Claims 6, 8, and 11, respectively, to depend upon any one of allowed Claims 1, 2, and 5, none of which is a multiple-dependent claim. After entry of these claim amendments, there will be 21 pending claims in the present application (*i.e.*, Claims 3, 6, 8, and 11 are multiple dependent claims counting as eleven claims for fee purposes). It is believed that Applicants have previously paid for the examination of 21 claims, such that no additional claim fees are required.

* * *

Applicants are responding to the non-final Office Action within the three-month shortened statutory period, and so Applicants believe that no extension fee is due with respect to this Amendment.

That said, the Examiner is hereby authorized to charge any required fee (or credit any overpayment) to Deposit Account No. 50–0332.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully assert that allowed Claims 1–11, 13, 14, and 20 remain in condition for immediate allowance and respectfully request that the Examiner now pass these claims to issuance.

Respectfully submitted,

/ Richard L. Additon /

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